

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, 7-9 and 12 are pending in the present application. Claims 2, 3, 9 and 12 are herein amended. Claims 7 and 8 are herein cancelled. Claims 13 and 14 are herein added. No new matter has been entered.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner holds Applicant's claims 3 and 12 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected claim, but would find them allowable if rewritten into independent form, including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3 and 12.

In view of amendments owing to the incorporation of allowable subject matter in claim 3 and its dependent claims, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and 103 is no longer viable. Therefore, Applicant submits that this amendment places the claims in the present application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the claimed invention distinguishes over the cited art and defines patentable subject matter. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by Applicant would be desirable to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney.

Application No.: 10/598,240
Art Unit: 1793

Amendment
Attorney Docket No.: 062933

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP

/BERNADETTE K. McGANN/

Bernadette K. McGann
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 65,127
Telephone: (202) 822-1100
Facsimile: (202) 822-1111

BKM/bam